

SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA

he should chiefly love that person, is not diminished in his regard. This love will have taught him to desire to bear all suffering for the glory of God.¹ For tribulation is the test of true charity, and, with those who have come to the perfect state, God uses the means of suffering and persecution to preserve and augment their perfection. Goaded on by their hunger for the salvation of souls, forgetting themselves, they knock, night and day, at the gate of Divine Mercy. For the more man loses himself, the more he finds God. This truth they read in the sweet and glorious book of the Word, and bring forth the fruit of patience. Although, with St. Paul, they have received the doctrine of truth in the abyss of the Godhead, they have likewise received the thorn in the flesh, to keep them in self-knowledge and humility, and to make them compassionate towards the weaknesses and frailty of others. The anguish that they endure, in seeing the sins that are done against God, purges thenV from all personal sorrows ; and God suffers Himself to be constrained by their panting desires, to have mercy upon the world, and by their endurance to reform His Church: " Verily, such as these can be called another Christ crucified, My only-begotten Son ; for they have taken upon themselves the office of Him who came as mediator to end the war, and to reconcile man with Me in peace, by much endurance even unto the shameful death of the Cross." ²

The whole being of such a saint is attuned to
mystical music,
and has become one sweet harmony, in which all the
powers

of the soul and all the members of the body play
their parts.

This spiritual melody was first heard from the Cross,
and those
that followed have learnt it from that Master. ^{te} My
infinite

Providence has given them the instruments, and has
shown them

the way in which to play upon them. And whatever I
give and

permit in this life is to enable them to increase the
power of

these instruments ; if they will only know it, and not
obscure the

light by which they see, with the cloud of self-love
and their own

pleasure and opinion." ³ Inebriated with trust in the
Divine
Providence, these souls embrace the doctrine of
voluntary poverty,

¹ Cap. 144.

² Cap. 145, cap. 146. ⁸ Cap. 147.